

Amendments of the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in this application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Previously presented) A method for using a network of set-top boxes, comprising:

providing at least a first and a second set-top box in a network, wherein each of said first and second set-top boxes includes a respective first and second storage device capable of storing programs;

making said first and second storage devices available to said network;

receiving a request to record a program in said first set-top box;

querying said network, with said first set-top box, to determine whether said program is stored in said second storage device included in said second set-top box;

when said query indicates that said program is stored in said second storage device, accessing said program stored on said second storage device over said network with said first set-top box in response to receiving said recording request; and

otherwise, using at least one of said first and said second storage devices in response to receiving said recording request.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein said first set-top box uses said first storage device when said first storage device is available, and attempts to use said second storage device when said first storage device is not available.

4. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein said first set-top box determines whether said first storage device or said second storage device has more space available and uses the one of said first and second storage devices that has more space available.

5-7. (Cancelled)

8. (Currently amended) The method of claim [[6]] 1 further comprising, when said program is not stored in said second storage device:

examining said first storage device to determine whether said first storage device has enough space available for said program;

recording said program to said first storage device, when there is enough space available for said program;

examining said second storage device to determine whether said second storage device has sufficient space available, when enough space was not available on said first storage device; and

recording said program to said second storage device, when there is sufficient space available for said program on said second storage device and not on said first storage device.

9. (Previously presented) A network of set-top boxes, comprising:

a network;

at least a first and a second set-top box connected in a said network;

a first and second storage device included in respective said first and second set-top boxes, wherein each of said storage devices is capable of storing programs-and is available to said network; and

a processor on said first set-top box, said processor being configured to:

receive a request to record a program;

transmit a query to said network to determine whether said program is stored in said second storage device included in said second set-top box;

access said program stored on said second storage device over said network with said first set-top box in response to receiving said recording request when said query indicates that said program is stored in said second storage device; and

otherwise, use at least one of said first and second storage devices in response to receiving said recording request.

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Previously presented) The network of claim 9 wherein said first set-top box uses said first storage device when said first storage device is available, and attempts to use said second storage device when said first storage device is not available.

12. (Previously presented) The network of claim 9 wherein said first set-top box determines whether said first storage device or said second storage device has more space available and uses the one of said first and second storage devices that has more space available.

13-15. (Cancelled)

16. (Previously presented) A network of set-top boxes, comprising:
means for providing at least a first and a second set-top box in a network, wherein each of said first and second set-top boxes includes a respective first and second storage device capable of storing programs;

means for making said first and second storage devices available to said network;

means for receiving a request to record a program in said first set-top box;

means for querying said network, with said first set-top box, to determine whether said program is stored in said second storage device included in said second set-top box;

means for accessing said program stored on said second storage device over said network with said first set-top box in response to receiving said recording request when said query indicates that said program is stored in said second storage device; and

otherwise, means for using at least one of said first and second storage devices in response to receiving said recording request.

17. (Previously presented) A computer program product comprising:
a computer usable medium having computer readable program code means embodied therein for causing a computer to use a network of set-top boxes, comprising:
computer readable program code means for causing a computer to provide at least a first and a second set-top box in a network, wherein each of said first and second set-top boxes includes a respective first and second storage device capable of storing programs;
computer readable program code means for causing a computer to make said first and second storage devices available to said network;
computer readable program code means for causing a computer to receive a request to record a program in said first set-top box;
computer readable program code means for causing a computer to query said network, with said first set-top box, to determine whether said program is stored in said second storage device included in said second set-top box;
computer readable program code means for causing a computer to access said program stored on said second storage device over said network with said first set-top box in response to receiving said recording request when said query indicates that said program is stored in said second storage device; and
otherwise, computer readable program code means for causing a computer to use said at least one of said first and said second storage devices in response to receiving said recording request.

18. (Cancelled)

19. (Previously presented) The computer program product of claim 17 wherein said first set-top box uses said first storage device when said first storage device is available, and attempts to use said second storage device when said first storage device is not available.

20. (Previously presented) The computer program product of claim 17 wherein said first set-top box determines whether said first storage device or said second storage device has

more space available and uses the one of said first and second storage devices that has more space available.

21-23. (Cancelled)

24. (Currently amended) The computer program product method of claim [[22]]
17 further comprising:

computer readable program code means for causing a computer, when said program is not stored in said second storage device, to examine said first storage device to determine whether said first storage device has enough space available for said program;

computer readable program code means for causing a computer, when said program is not stored in said second storage device, to record said program to said first storage device, when there is enough space available for said program;

computer readable program code means for causing a computer, when said program is not stored in said second storage device, to examine said second storage device to determine whether said second storage device has enough space available, when enough space was not available on said first storage device; and

computer readable program code means for causing a computer, when said program is not stored in said second storage device, to record said program to said second storage device, when there is enough space available for said program on said second storage device and not on said first storage device.

25-27. (Cancelled)

28. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising recording said program to said second storage device prior to receiving said recording request in said first set-top box.

29. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein accessing said program stored on said second storage device comprises retrieving, over said network, said program from said second storage device, with said first set-top box.

30. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein accessing said program stored on said second storage device comprises displaying said program with said first set-top box.

31. (Previously presented) The network of claim 9, further comprising a processor on said second set-top box, configured to receive a recording request prior to receiving said recording request in said first set-top box.

32. (Previously presented) The network of claim 9, wherin said processor is further configured to retrieve, over said network, said program from said second storage device when said query indicates that said program is stored in said second storage device.

33. (Previously presented) The network of claim 9, wherein said processor is further configured to display said program when said query indicates that said program is stored in said second storage device.

34. (Previously presented) The computer program product of claim 17, wherein said computer usable medium having computer readable program code means further comprises computer readable program code means for recording said program to said second storage device prior to receiving the recording request in said first set-top box.

35. (Previously presented) The computer program product of claim 17, wherein said computer readable program code means for causing a computer to access said program comprises computer readable program code means for causing a computer to retrieve, over said network, said program from said second storage device, with said first set-top box.

36. (Previously presented) The computer program product of claim 17, wherein said computer readable program code means for causing a computer to access said program comprises computer readable program code means for causing a computer to display said program with the first set-top box.